

OSTEOARTHRITIS

Osteoarthritis causes pain in the weight bearing joints or your body. Most people with osteoarthritis have pain in their lower back, neck, hips, knees or the joints at the end of the fingers. Osteoarthritis is seen more often in people who are overweight, older or in those who have been injured.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR JOINTS HURT

1. Rest the joints every day. Your doctor will tell you for how long and how often.
2. Get enough sleep each night so that you feel rested when you awake in the mornings.
3. Place an ice pack or heat on your painful joint each day. Make sure that ice is wrapped in an ice pack or have the towel between the ice and your skin or make sure that you keep the heating pad covered. Be very careful with the temperature because your skin may burn. A bath or shower can count as one of your heat applications.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT PAIN FLARE UPS

1. Do mild exercises that move your joints without overstraining them, like walking, knitting, bicycling. Ask your doctor about others.
2. If you are overweight, ask you doctor to help you with a weight loss program. One of our Family Practice Center nutritionists can help you with this.

3. Take anti-inflammatory medicine if your doctor has ordered them.
4. If your doctor orders pain medicine, take it as ordered.
5. Ask your doctor about special devices which can make your household and work tasks simpler.
6. Ask your doctor about getting physical therapy for your specific problem.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Medications: _____
2. Resting your joints: _____
3. Exercises: _____
4. Return to see your doctor in: _____